



ST. MARGARET
SCHOOL

2023-2024
Parent/Student
Handbook

ST. MARGARET SCHOOL
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2023-2024

ADMINISTRATION

Pastor
Principal
ES Assistant Principal
MS Assistant Principal
Admissions Director
School Counselor Pre-K-Grade 5
School Counselor Grades 6-8

Technology Coordinator
Assistant Technology Coordinator

Msgr. Kevin Schenning
Mrs. Anna C. Shanahan
Mrs. Lauren Kimmel
Mrs. Anne Askey
Mrs. Cecilia Pleiss
Mrs. Michelle Curran
Mrs. Peggy Messaris

Mr. Sean Ballweber
Mr. Jon Gerstmyer

FACULTY/STAFF

Pre-Kindergarten 3
Pre-Kindergarten 4

Mrs. Robyn Hirsch
Mrs. Michele Forrest
Mrs. Jo Ann Kopp
Mrs. Terri Rhodes

Kindergarten

Mrs. Brigitte Gwiazdowski

Grade 1

Mrs. Margaret Kelly
Mrs. Mary Beth Sieck
Mrs. Lisa Gostomski
Mrs. Stacy Peach

Grade 2

Ms. Madison Raimondo
Mrs. Meghan Fannin
Mrs. Linda Remsky

Grade 3

Mrs. Michelle Swenson
Mrs. Kim Bogdan
Mrs. Allie Hagerman

Grade 4

Mrs. Kim Szymanowski
Mrs. Chris Barnes
Mrs. Eileen Healy

Grade 5

Mrs. Mary Beth Ballweber
Mrs. Megan Bredlow
Mrs. Kate Clark

Grade 6

Mrs. Shellye Caron
Mrs. Lucy Olsen

Grade 7

Mrs. Stacey Reynolds
Mrs. Jill Doran
Ms. Noelle Teramani
Mrs. Nicole Thoms

Grade 8

Mrs. Jen Cowan
Mrs. Lisa Komondor
Ms. Meaghan Sliwka

Non homeroom teachers

Mrs. Connie Cordell
Mr. Richard Hauf
Ms. Rebecca Lewis

Music K-8

Mrs. Margaret Gerstmyer

Art K-8

Mrs. Dawn DeVoe

ES Physical Education

Mr. Doug Sharretts

MS Physical Education

Mr. Ontel Alcalde

Spanish PreK-4

Mrs. Allyson Hill

Spanish 5-8

Mrs. Pauli Dillon

ES Resource

Mrs. Angela Dengler

MS Resource

Ms. Melissa Miller

ES Nurse

Mrs. Kelly Link

MS Nurse

Mrs. Kate Piechocki

MS Religion/Virtus

Mrs. Lacey Zankowitz

Coordinator/Office Assistant

Mrs. Brenda Bell

Instructional Aides

Mrs. Tricia Coleman

Mrs. Theresa DiPaula

Ms. Sierra Divel

Mrs. Linda Dockery

Ms. Olivia Ewers

Mrs. Paige Henry

Mrs. Rebecca Lodestro

Mrs. Kathy Mullin

Mrs. Anna Marie Ohler

Mrs. Amy Pumphrey

Mrs. Rachael Rife

Mrs. Janet Rittershofer

Mrs. Karen Ryan

Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Kendra Buza

ES Secretary

Mrs. Stacie Currey

MS Secretary

Mrs. Paula Schafer

Business Manager

Mrs. Donna Bynion

Bookkeeper

Mrs. Donna Reigner

Extended Day Care Director

Mrs. Paige Henry

Extended Day Care Staff

Mrs. Valerie Knorr
Mrs. Tricia Coleman
Ms. Sierra Divel
Ms. Olivia Ewers
Mrs. Jeanette Gamble
Ms. Riley Kirby
Ms. Savannah Sieck

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Pastor
Principal

Msgr. Kevin Schenning
Mrs. Anna Shanahan

President
Members:

Mr. Michael Thomson
Mrs. Alison D'Alessandro
Mr. Steve DiBiagio
Mrs. Cindy Height
Mr. Jeremy Joseph
Mrs. Terri Lyons
Mrs. Cindi Stewart

Elementary School
204 Hickory Ave.
Bel Air, MD 21014
Phone: 410-879-1113
Fax: 410-838-5879

Middle School
1716A Churchville Rd.
Bel Air, MD 21015
Phone: 410-877-9660
Fax: 410-420-9322

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| A Message to Parents/Guardians | 6 |
| Mission, Vision, and History of SMS | 7 |
| School Accreditations | 8 |
| Executive Organization | 9 |
| Catholic Identity | 10 |
| Admissions and Registration Policies | 11 |
| Tuition and Fees | 13 |
| Arrival and Dismissal Procedures | 17 |
| Attendance Policies | 24 |
| School Hours | 25 |
| Inclement Weather Policies | 26 |
| Food Related Policies | 27 |
| Dress Code and Uniform Policy | 28 |
| Academics and Academic Policies | 32 |
| Grading Policy | 33 |
| Discipline and Student Behavior Policies | 36 |
| Harassment Policy | 40 |
| Bullying Policy | 42 |
| Acceptable Use of Technology Policy | 43 |
| School Organizations and School Activities | 46 |
| School Support Services | 47 |
| Health Policies | 49 |
| Partnership with Parents | 52 |
| Emergency Plans | 54 |
| Use of School Grounds | 55 |
| Policies Regarding Legal Matters | 56 |
| Receipt of Handbook | 59 |

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Welcome to the St. Margaret School community! By enrolling a child in our Catholic school, a parent/guardian agrees to the following important responsibilities:

- to be a partner with the school in the education of your child
- to understand and support the Catholic mission and identity of the school
- to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
- to know who your child's teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
- to discuss concerns and problems with the person (s) most directly involved, and the administration, before contacting legal authorities
- to be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
- to promote your school and to speak well of it to others, including social media, etc.
- to meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and to support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
- to appreciate that Catholic education is a privilege that many persons do not have
- to encourage the child to take responsibility for his/her school work

Parental support/compliance

In cases of disregard of the direction of staff members, threats or threatening behavior, serious or repeated noncompliance with school policies or procedures, or other demonstrated lack of support or cooperation, whether by parent, child, or other family member, the administration reserves the right to withdraw child/children from the school. Depending on the severity of the breach of partnership with the school, parent or other family member may be prohibited from entering the campus.

You and your child will be required to sign acknowledgement of receipt of this handbook.

SCHOOL MISSION/VISION and HISTORY

St. Margaret School is a co-ed elementary school for grades PreK 3 through grade 8. St. Margaret School is one school located on two campuses. Grades PK through grade 5 are located on the Elementary School campus and grades 6 through 8 are located at the Middle School campus. St. Margaret School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process). St. Margaret School is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, policy or personal accommodation that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings, and we will always teach and act consistent with the tenants of the Catholic Church.

Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability may be directed to Mrs. Michelle Curran and/or Mrs. Peggy Messaris, School Counselors.

The school reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body.

Mission Statement

St. Margaret School is a parish school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore offering a rigorous academic program while focusing on GRIT (God, Respect, Responsibility, Integrity and Teamwork). As a child of God, each student is encouraged to live the Gospel message and spread the Good News through his or her words and actions. Our graduates are equipped to be faith-filled 21st century learners and leaders.

Vision Statement

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore provide a Christ-centered education that is academically excellent and empowers students to reach their full potential – spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and morally.

At St. Margaret School we strive to:

- Foster our students' faith by providing a Christ-filled learning environment which promotes prayer, reflection, and service
- Teach our students to be independent thinkers and problem solvers, so that they are prepared for challenges beyond the classroom
- Sustain a professional community of highly effective faculty and staff committed to the school's mission through continuous learning opportunities and a favorable comparison of salaries with surrounding districts

- Ensure operational vitality by maintaining a fiscally responsible budget and capital plan that considers trends in enrollment management and marketing, upgrading school facilities, and provides the highest quality of education aligning with the mission of our school

History of the School

St. Margaret School (SMS), the oldest parochial school still in operation in Harford County, opened May 1, 1911, six years after Fr. Alphonsus Frederick founded St. Margaret Church. From that first day of school, when 43 pupils were enrolled and guided by two Catholic School Sisters of Notre Dame, through the current school year, St. Margaret has been providing a quality Catholic education to students throughout the Harford County area.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATIONS

Accreditation

St. Margaret School is accredited by Cognia through June 2027. In accordance with standards set by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, St. Margaret School met the requirements established by the Cognia Accreditation Commission and Board of Trustees and was thereby accredited by the SACS Council on Accreditation and School Improvement.

National Blue Ribbon School

St. Margaret School was honored to be acknowledged as a 2013 National Blue Ribbon School on September 24, 2013 by Secretary Arne Duncan of the U.S. Department of Education. This means that St. Margaret School is a school that, according to its standardized test scores, ranks in the top 15% of schools in the nation and proves to be an exemplary school in other areas of viability. This includes public schools and private schools in elementary schools, middle schools and high schools. Only 50 private schools in the nation are selected each year.

Green School Recognition

The Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education has awarded St. Margaret School the Green School Award in the year 2013 and renewed in 2017. St. Margaret School is currently involved in the recertification process for the 2021 school year. This award is bestowed upon schools that comply with their criteria for classroom integration of environmental issue instruction; environmental related professional development for the faculty; celebration of the numerous school's achievements; demonstration of selected conservation best management practices; and sustained school-community partnerships to enhance environmental learning.

EXECUTIVE ORGANIZATION

Pastor

The pastor is the director and the spiritual leader of the parish school. He is kept informed of school matters, including updates on the progress of the school, by the principal. In addition, the pastor discusses all serious school concerns with the principal.

Principal

The principal is the lead administrator of the parish school, and is responsible for its religious atmosphere, educational direction, and financial viability. He/She is appointed by and responsible to the pastor.

Assistant Principals

The assistant principals support and assist the principal in the operation of the school. Areas of responsibilities may be mutually agreed upon between the principal and assistant principals.

Subject & Grade Level Coordinators

Subject/Grade level coordinators serve in an advisory role to the administration of St. Margaret School. Their role is to assist with the implementation of best practices related specifically to one content area or grade band.

Classroom Teachers

Teachers in a school serve as role models for the students they see every day. By demonstrating professionalism, enthusiasm, initiative, dedication, cooperation, and respectful, effective communication, teachers will contribute positively to the overall atmosphere of the school.

Instructional Assistants

Instructional assistants serve as support for teachers and as role models for the students. By demonstrating professionalism, enthusiasm, initiative, dedication, cooperation, and respectful, effective communication, assistants will contribute positively to the overall atmosphere of the school.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

It is our ministry as Catholic educators to embody our faith in everything we do. We model and teach children how to form a personal relationship with Jesus and build a foundation for lifelong learning and discipleship. The Archdiocesan theme of the year is “*The Joy of the Lord is Your Strength*” *Nehemiah 8:10*. Our Saint of the Year is the Blessed Mother, Mary Cause of Our Joy.

Daily Prayer

At St. Margaret School daily prayers are an integral part of our Catholic Identity. Students pray during morning and afternoon announcements, the Angelus, as well as before each subject area class. Schoolwide monthly scripture verses are taught and reflected on throughout the year.

Religion Class Requirement

Religion is a required subject area for all students attending St. Margaret School. All students enrolled in St. Margaret School must attend religion classes and services.

Prayer Partners

Grade levels are partnered (both ES and MS) and participate in opportunities throughout the year to share their faith and build relationships with one another.

Weekly Mass

At St. Margaret School, faculty and students attend Mass on a weekly basis. Students actively participate in Mass through various roles such as altar servers, readers, music ministry, etc. All school Masses are closed to the public. Parents wishing to attend any school Mass must sign in at the main office and receive a visitor’s badge before entering the Church. The middle school campus celebrates Mass on Wednesdays at 8:30am in the Mission, and the elementary school campus celebrates Mass on Thursdays at 8:30am in the Church. Faculty and students also attend Mass on Holy Days: All Saints Day, Immaculate Conception, and Ash Wednesday. Holy Day Masses will be held on both campuses: middle school at 8:30am and elementary school at 10:00am.

Adoration

Students in all grades will participate in Catholic Eucharistic Adoration. Adoration is an opportunity for students to pray in the presence of the blessed sacrament.

Outreach

St. Margaret School is active in community outreach. We dedicate time each month as a school family to provide support to our community and others through outreach projects and service.

September- Choose Hope Collection

October- Socktober

November- Thanksgiving Parish Food Drive

December- Parish Advent Giving/Create

Blankets

January- Casey Cares Pajama Drive

February- Love Our Community- Catholic Schools Week Outreach

March- Lenten PaperGoods Drive

April- SMS Day of Service

May- Class Mass Outreach (TBD by Grade Levels)

ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION POLICIES

The Philosophy of the Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore is based on the Christian Social Principles of the Gospel Message-to love and respect the rights of all people. Children of all faiths are admitted with the understanding that they participate in the religion program. Admission to St. Margaret School is based on the developmental readiness of the child for the age/grade level being requested.

Admission to St. Margaret School is based on the following priority of acceptance provided that there are OPENINGS in the level requested: (1) children of staff members, (2) siblings of current students, (3) all others. Siblings who are on a Waiting List during the previous school year will be placed on the Waiting List the following year – in the order in which they are on the current list.

Documentation needed for application

- Completed application form
- Student's birth certificate
- Student's baptismal certificate
- Records of student immunization and health data
- Previous school records
- Standardized testing scores if applicable
- Letter of recommendation from prior school (grades 6-8)

Non-Discrimination Statement

The State of Maryland requires the following statement in the Student Handbook:

“It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

- (1) Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and
- (2) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:
 - (i) Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
 - (ii) Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or

- (iii) Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.”

The State of Maryland does not require a nonpublic school that is religiously affiliated to enroll, retain, or extend privileges to a student or prospective student who does not meet the usual and regular qualifications, requirements, and standards of the program or school or to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with the program or school’s religious or moral teachings provided that the denial, rule, regulation, or policy is not based on discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability may be directed to Mrs. Curran (mcurran@smsch.org) at the ES and Mrs. Messaris (pmessaris@smsch.org) at the MS.

Custody papers are necessary in the case of separation, divorce, or adoption. Legal documentation regarding any change in custody status during the time a child is enrolled in school must be presented to school officials. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with official copies of court orders. The school must maintain copies of custody decrees or other court orders in order to assure compliance with the law.

Re-registration for current families begins in November. Applications and registrations are to be completed through the Parent Portal link on our website. This can be found under the Admissions tab or the Parents tab. Before a new student's official acceptance, there is a screening and completion of necessary forms. These forms are listed below. Acceptance into grade 8 is restricted to transfers from Catholic schools. Students are encouraged and welcome to shadow for a school day.

Placement

Students are initially placed using the results of an admissions test, teacher evaluation (from previous school), permanent records including report cards, and standardized test results.

- PK 3 & 4 Program: A child must be three or four years respectively of age by September 1st. The 3 & 4 year old must be toilet trained. “Pull-ups” are not allowed.
- Kindergarten Program: A child must be five years of age by September 1st and take the Brigance Assessment Test.
- First Grade: A child must be six years of age by September 1st. All transfer students will present a recent report card and take a placement test.
- Students entering grades 2-7 will take a placement test.
- All prospective students will tour, shadow, and complete an entrance interview with administration prior to consideration for acceptance.

Religion is required for each year a student attends St. Margaret School. All students enrolled in St. Margaret School must attend religion classes and services.

Probationary Period

All new students will be monitored for academic progress and behavior during the first year. If during this time difficulties arise and the school is unable to meet the needs of the student, the parents will be asked to place their child in another school. Such recommendations would only occur after conferences with the parents and after exhausting all other methods of help.

TUITION AND FEES:

| Tuition 2023-2024 | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| PRE-3 (2 day) half day | | \$2,435 |
| PRE-3-4 (3 day) half day | | \$3,650 |
| PRE-4 (3 day) full day | | \$4,580 |
| PRE-4 (5 day) half day | | \$6,085 |
| PRE-4 (full day) - 8th grade | per child | \$7,625 |
| Discount for 2nd Child * | | (\$1,100) |
| Discount for 3rd Child* | | (\$2,200) |
| Discount for 4th Child * | | (\$4,400) |

St. Margaret tuition rates apply to all applicants. Sibling discounts apply to students in full five day preschool through grade 8.

Families choose from two tuition payment options: payment in full of all tuition and fees on or before July 1st with a 2% tuition discount, or payment in ten equal monthly installments from July through April via direct debit. The 2% discount is applied to a child’s net tuition after consideration of any scholarships, tuition grants, financial aid, etc. The discount opportunity expires on July 1 if payment in full has not been received on or before this date. Direct debits are made on the 5th or 20th of the month per parents’ preference, as selected on the Banking Agreement.

In February, a \$150 tuition deposit is due, along with a signed Financial Agreement. An additional \$415 tuition deposit is due in May, along with a Banking Authorization for monthly debits. This deposit includes \$65 for Home School Association dues. The deposit and dues are assessed on a per family basis.

Invoices detailing tuition and fees are emailed to families beginning in May, after all deposits and financial paperwork have been received. Tuition invoices cannot be issued until a family's financial file is complete. The tuition deposits, net of Home School Association dues, are applied to tuition invoices and reduce the balance due.

Should an unusual circumstance occur during the school year that affects tuition payments, the family should contact the principal immediately. **All deposits and tuition payments are non-refundable.** Tuition for partial year attendance is determined on a full trimester basis, except for fees which are not prorated.

Fees vary by grade level and include Archdiocesan assessments, test fees, classroom supplies, activities and field trips, materials, textbooks, and technology fees. The 8th grade fee also includes all graduation expenses, including gown rental, diplomas, final 8th grade celebration event, and graduation reception. The net fees include a \$65 state textbook credit that is deducted from the fees of the first 680 K-8 students who complete the registration process. These fees are included and itemized on a family's tuition invoice.

| Fees 2023-2024 | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| PRE K 3 YEAR OLDS | \$265.00 |
| PRE K 4 YEAR OLDS – HALF DAYS | \$285.00 |
| PRE K 4 YEAR OLDS - FULL DAYS | \$385.00 |
| KINDERGARTEN | \$550.00 |
| 1 ST GRADE | \$572.00 |
| 2 ND GRADE | \$570.00 |
| 3 RD GRADE | \$580.00 |
| 4 TH GRADE | \$577.00 |
| 5 TH GRADE | \$577.00 |
| 6 TH GRADE | \$515.00 |
| 7 TH GRADE | \$515.00 |
| 8 TH GRADE | \$565.00 |

New Family Registration/Application Fee per student \$100.00

Returning Family Registration Fee per family \$100.00

Home School Association Dues per family \$65.00

Delinquent Accounts

It is the policy of the **Archdiocese of Baltimore** to hold all records and report cards of students whose parents have delinquent school accounts (this includes tuition, registration, fees, book/material fees, activity fees, fund-raising fees, Extended Care fees, damaged/lost textbooks, etc.). If prior year's tuition has not been paid in full at the beginning of the new school year, students will be dropped from the new school year's enrollment.

St. Margaret School reserves the right to refuse to provide any official school record, including report cards and diplomas, to parents or other educational institutions until all financial obligations to the school are satisfied in full. Delinquent accounts may result in suspension of classroom services, access to PowerSchool, school-sponsored extracurricular activities, classes and exams. Payment on delinquent account balances may be required to be in the form of cash or certified check at the school's discretion. St. Margaret School will consider requests for exceptions to these policies on an individual basis if it judges extraordinary circumstances are demonstrated. If an account is delinquent past 90 days, the student may be dis-enrolled and the account turned over to a collection agency. All related collection fees and expenses will be the

responsibility of the parent.

Tuition Assistance

There are several potential resources for financial assistance for qualified families, and awards may be received from more than one source.

- **St. Margaret Parish**

Tuition grants are available to families who demonstrate financial need and are registered and active parishioners of St. Margaret Parish. Families must apply every year for tuition assistance and continued need must be demonstrated.

Families requesting consideration for tuition assistance must complete and submit a Parent's Financial Statement along with an application fee to Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. Applications are available through the Parish Office or at <http://www.stmargaret.org/school.php>. Additionally, parents are asked to submit to the Tuition Assistance Coordinator a copy of their current income tax return, including all pertinent schedules, W-2 statements and business income tax returns, if self-employed. In the case of separated and divorced parents, both parents must submit a Parent's Financial Statement, as well as income tax returns.

- **Area Parishes**

Several local parishes that do not have associated schools also offer tuition grants to their parishioners. Families should contact their home parish for more information.

- **Archdiocese of Baltimore**

Families may apply for tuition assistance through the Archdiocese of Baltimore. An application to the FACTS Management Company must be completed and submitted according to the predetermined date. Information and forms can be found at: <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3QDJ0>

- **Maryland State BOOST Scholarships**

Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) provides state-funded scholarships for some students who are eligible for the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program to attend eligible nonpublic schools. Awards are granted based on household income, with the lowest income served first. The electronic application for parents to complete is available at: <http://marylandpublicschools.org/Pages/boost/index.aspx>. The application deadline is generally in late May, with award decisions being made in July. An application must be submitted each year to be considered for a renewal award.

Withdrawal

Parents should notify the school office in writing when withdrawing children. Parents need to complete a record release form that will be forwarded to the new school. Saint Margaret School reserves the right to refuse to provide any official school records, including report cards, to other educational institutions until all financial obligations to the school are satisfied in full.

All fees are non-refundable and are not prorated if a family withdraws or enrolls midyear.

Miscellaneous Expenses

If funds are sent to school for any other reason, please enclose payment in an envelope marked with the student's name, grade and designation (i.e. EDC, fundraiser, etc.)

Returned Payments

If a direct debit or check payment is not honored by the bank on which it is drawn for any reason, a \$25 fee will be assessed on a per transaction basis to reimburse the school for the fees we incurred. The school may, at its discretion, impose the requirement that all subsequent payments be in cash or certified check/money order.

Damage Assessment

Parents or guardians are financially responsible for damages to school and campus facilities, or other person's property incurred by their children. This includes lost textbooks, library books, or other school owned materials, including computers and other electronic equipment.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival Procedures

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ARRIVAL- K- 5th grades: Arrival at 7:45-8:05am

Students MUST remain in their vehicles until 7:45AM. Staff will not be available until that time to check students into the buildings. Parents will have to sign into the main office if your student arrives after 8:05am.

Morning drop-off takes place on the school playground parking lot. Drive onto the lot from the Wright Street entrance off Hickory Avenue. Cars may only turn right onto Wright Street. This is a posted regulation and violators may be ticketed by the Bel Air Town Police. Following a horseshoe pattern, enter the lot and pull up until near the exit. Students exit through the right car door only. Students will walk directly to their homerooms from their vehicles. **No parents should drop off students in the church lot. This area is reserved for the Early Childhood Center.**

Grades 1, 2, 3S, and 4 will enter the white building doors closest to the playground.

Grades K, 3 and 5 will enter the brick building through the Gym door.



PreK4 EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ARRIVAL- Arrival at 8:05-8:15am

PreK-4 parents will enter the church lot from Hickory Ave., and drive up to the Early Childhood Center entrance. You will be greeted by the classroom teacher who will prompt you through the arrival procedures. Once completed, the student will be escorted into the building. You will then proceed to exit the lot. Parents will have to sign into the main office if your student arrives after 8:15. Instruction begins at 8:15am.



PreK3 ARRIVAL- Arrival at 8:05-8:15am

PreK3 parents will pull into the playground parking lot by making a right from Hickory Avenue onto Wright St. No left turns are allowed from Hickory Avenue. Turn into the parking lot and remain to the right of the cones near the white building. Pull around to the side of the white building near the nurse door entrance. This is where Mrs. Hirsch will come out to individually get students from each vehicle. Please remain in your vehicle and have your student unbuckled once you pull up near the nurse entrance. Parents will have to sign into the main office if your student arrives after 8:15am. Instruction begins at 8:15am.



DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

PreK 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER DISMISSAL- Dismissal at 2:20pm (½ day 11:20am)

At dismissal, PreK-4 parents will drive into the church lot and when you arrive at the entrance to the Early Childhood Center, your child will be escorted to you by the classroom teacher and/or aide. The same procedure as arrival above.

PreK 3 DISMISSAL - Dismissal at 11:20am

At dismissal the elementary students are in session. No cars are permitted in the parking lot or near the white building during this time of the day. We ask that parents park on Hickory Avenue and walk to the entrance between the white building and the rectory/priest garages. Your child will be dismissed one by one. Please do not congregate at the doors. We ask that for the sake of the other students in our building that parents do not arrive until as close to 11:20am as possible.

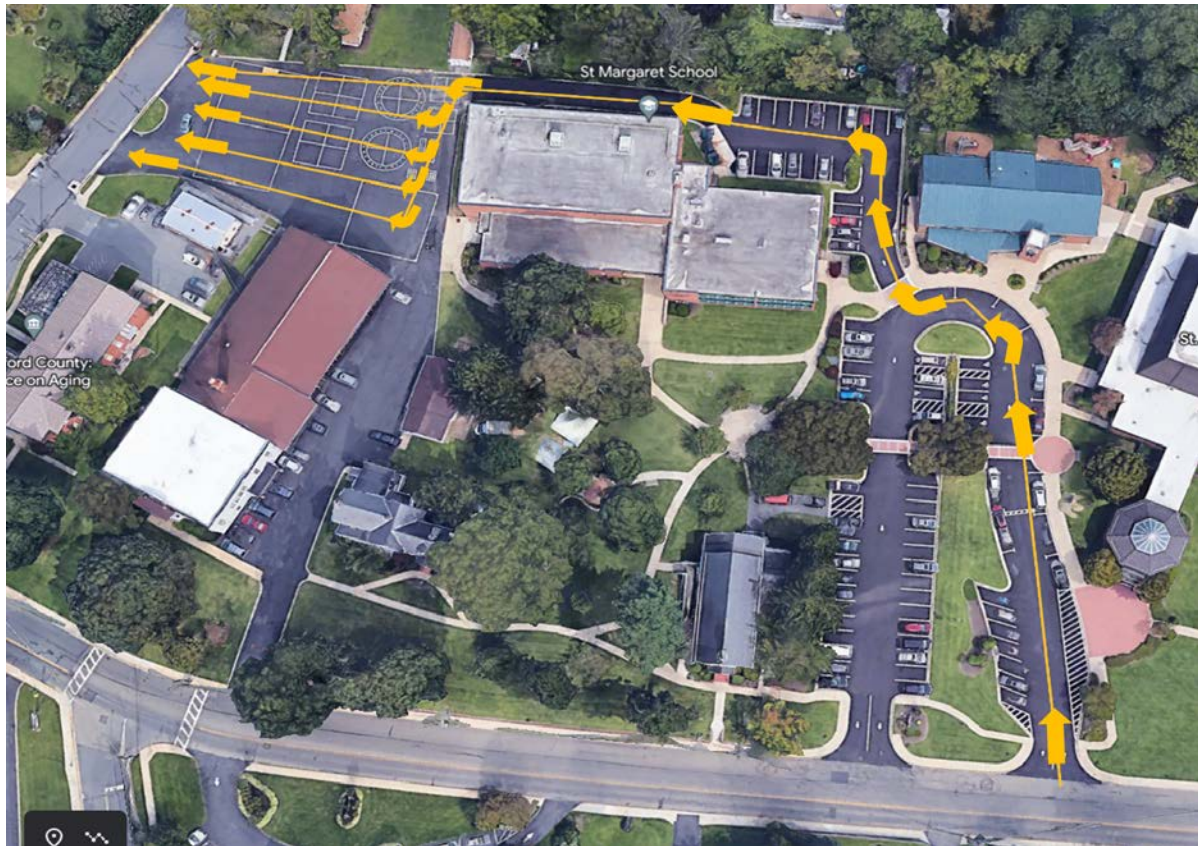
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISMISSAL K-5th grades:

Parents are permitted to park in the parking lot (see below) or on other streets and walk up to the school. Parents are to hold up a sign with last name posted, and supervise their children following dismissal. Students are not permitted to remain on campus to play unsupervised.

Kindergarten will dismiss at 2:45pm.

Grades 1-5 will dismiss at 2:55pm.

Students will remain in the building with the teacher at the location listed below. Any student not picked up by 3:05 will go to the main office to call their parents. Students will remain in the main office building until they are dismissed. Charges will apply for late pick up.



Dismissal locations by grade level:

Kindergarten Dismissal- 2:45pm Main office doors (lobby area brick building)

Grade 1 Dismissal- White building doors to parking lot.

Grade 2 Dismissal- White building nurse door exit.

Grade 3 Dismissal-

Mrs. Bogdan: Main office doors (lobby area brick building) outside after K dismisses

Mrs. Hagerman: Main office doors (lobby area brick building) outside after K dismisses

Mrs. Szymanowski: white building doors in parking lot

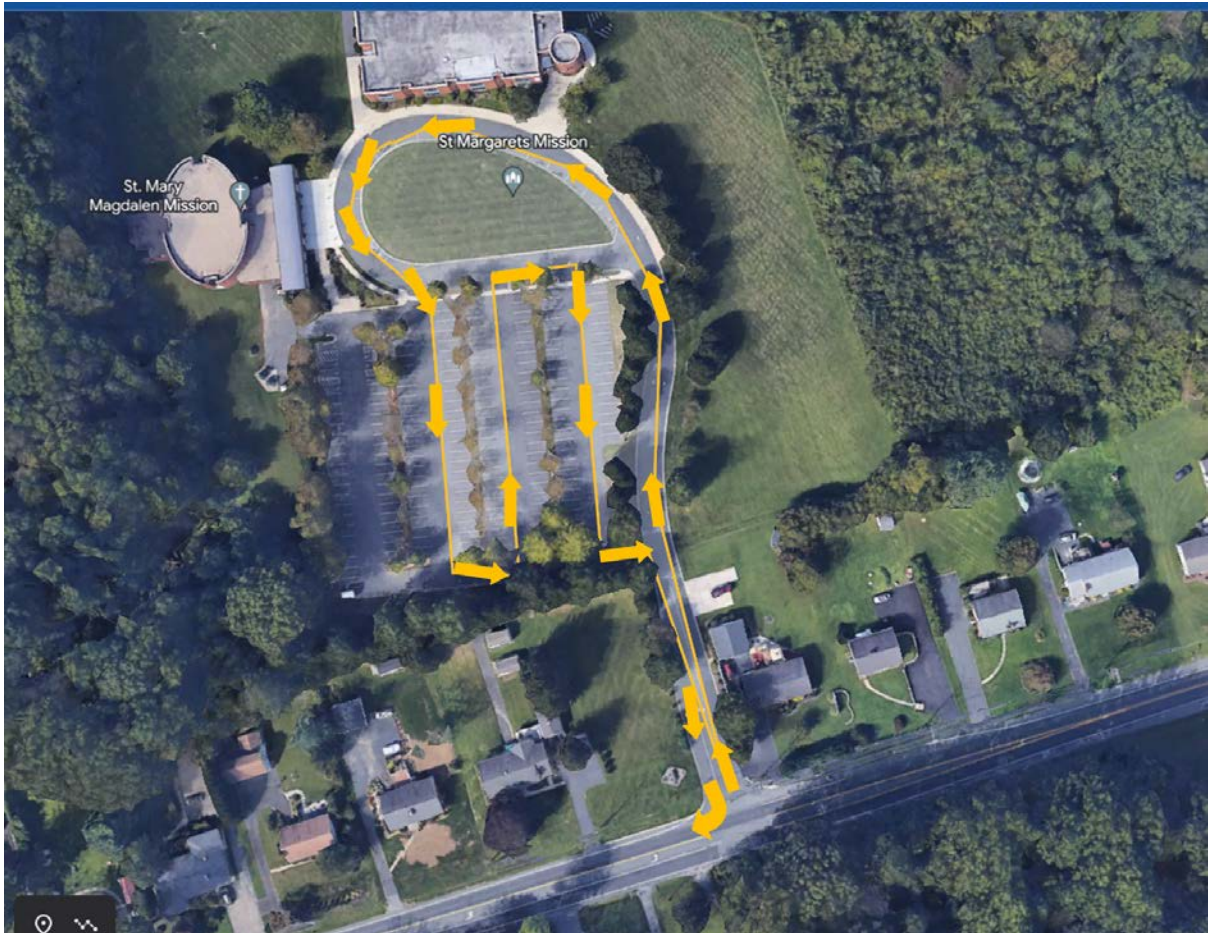
Grade 4 Dismissal- White building nurse door exit.

Grade 4 will dismiss before Grade 2 in case siblings in grade 4 need to assist with younger siblings.

Grade 5 Dismissal- Brick building gym door leading to parking lot.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ARRIVAL

Parents arriving prior to 7:25 AM should park in designated lanes. Students must remain in their vehicles. A staff member will indicate when it is time for the students to exit their vehicles and proceed to the school building. Beginning at 7:30 AM, cars are to proceed slowly down the driveway past the parking lot to the semi-circle. Students should exit vehicles curbside at either the main office doors or the doors near the mission depending on door assignment. The students will proceed directly to their classrooms. Cars should not pull around stopped cars to exit the lot. Please permit all cars in front of you to pull off and then proceed. Follow the designated exit pattern through the parking lot.



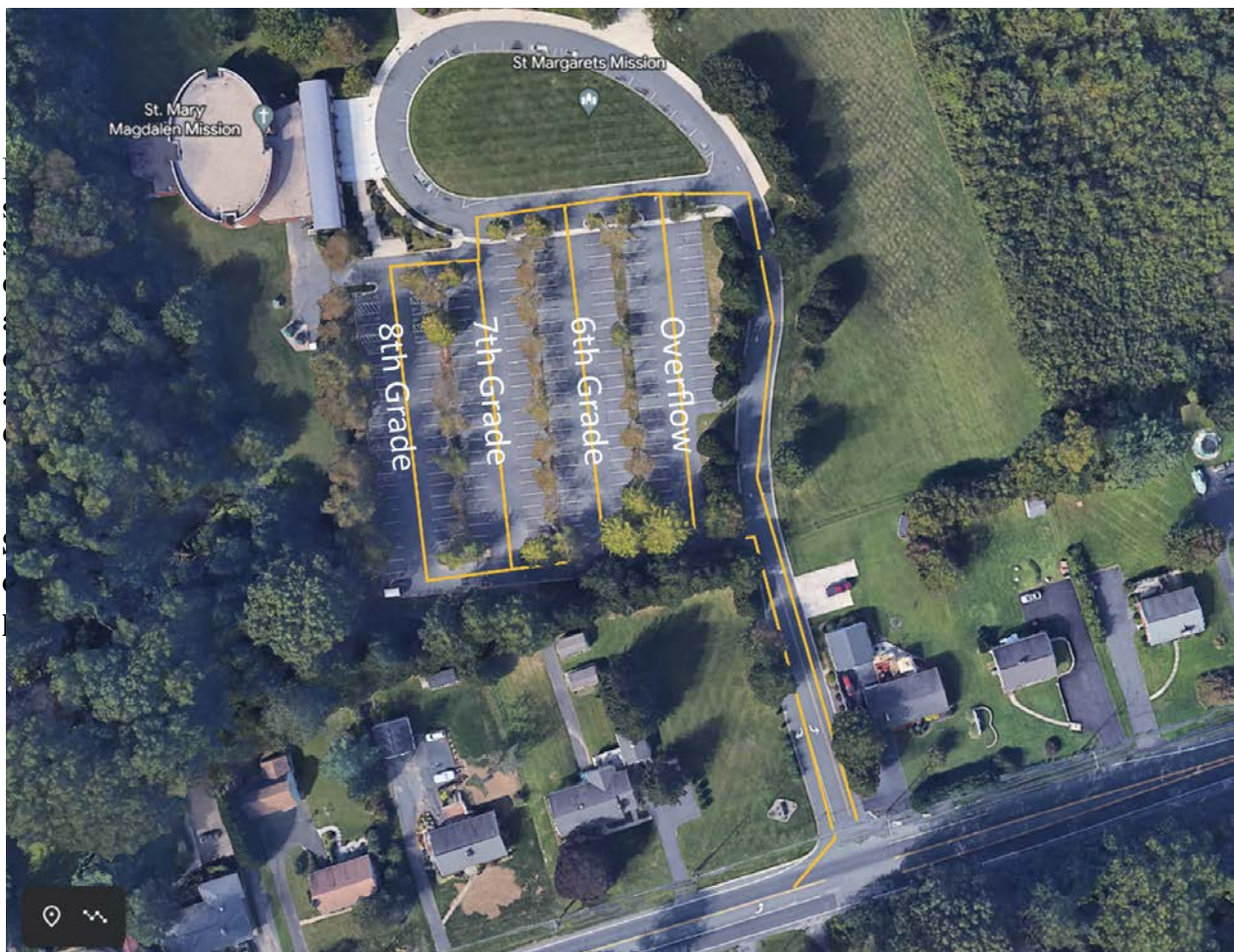
MIDDLE SCHOOL DISMISSAL - Dismissal at 2:30pm

Cars are to proceed slowly down the driveway past the parking lot and turn left along the straight curb of the semi-circle. The semi-circle will be closed to all traffic at pick-up time. Proceed straight and park in the assigned lanes for each grade level within the parking lot. Parents/guardians picking up 8th graders will park in lane 1 (closest to the mission). Lane 2 will be for 7th grade. Lane 3 will be for 6th grade. Lane 4 will be for overflow parking. Once students are dismissed and walking to cars, all lanes are closed while the students are finding their vehicles. There should be at least three rows of cars in each lane. Teachers will place cones at the front and rear of each row of cars. Please follow the directions of the faculty in the parking lot. Students will be dismissed by grade level and must walk socially distanced to their vehicle and immediately enter it.

Carpools/Siblings:

If your carpool includes students in multiple grades and one of them is 7th grade, please use the 7th grade lane. If no one is in 7th grade, please decide what lane you will enter so the students can locate you. Please be sure to communicate with students about which lane you will be using.

Students are not permitted to congregate in the parking lot. When exiting the lot at dismissal, cars should only make a right hand turn onto Route 22. Left hand turns block the vision of right turning drivers and are risky at any time onto Route 22. Please be patient as cars need to be careful exiting onto Route 22.



ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Absence

Regular attendance is considered essential for learning at St. Margaret School. Students need to develop the work habits and responsibilities required of all of us as we go through life. When a student is absent from school, a parent/legal guardian must telephone the school offices. Call the Middle School Office at 410-877-9660 or email Mrs. Schafer (pschafer@smsch.org) between 7:15am and 8:30am or the Elementary School Office at 410-879-1113 or email Mrs. Currey (scurrey@smsch.org) between 7:30am and 8:30am to report the reason for absence. All absences and tardiness become part of a student's permanent record.

Absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. There are regularly scheduled vacations and holidays in the school calendar, which is based on mandated instructional days by the State of Maryland and the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Please check these ahead of time when scheduling trips or doctor's appointments. Permission may not be given by any teacher or administrator for students to be absent for extra vacations or holidays. These decisions are the responsibility of the parents. Prolonged unauthorized absences can and does affect students' grades and academic standing. The school cannot be responsible for the consequences of these absences. Personal instruction delivered by the teacher cannot be replicated. Missed work and assignments may only be obtained upon return and provided that missed work assignments may not be available for all absences, as they are dependent upon the nature of the work. Teachers are not responsible for creating alternative assignments or experiences for absent students. Students will have the same number of days they are absent to complete their missed work. Students who are absent from school may not participate in any after school or evening school sponsored events such as sports, dances, etc.

When he/she returns to school, the student must bring a written note to his/her homeroom teacher signed by a parent/legal guardian stating the reason for absence. The school reserves the right to require a doctor's note for absences due to illness or injury or need for assessment/evaluation. A child may not return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in all school activities.

If a student will be out of school for an extended period, whether continuous or intermittent, parents should consult with the administration regarding appropriate support of the student in fulfilling the school curriculum or alternative arrangements such as home and hospital services through the local public school district.

Per the Archdiocese of Baltimore policy, a student marked absent for more than 20 instructional days in one school year is considered excessively absent and may result in the student being retained. The administration reserves the right to request a conference with parents of students with excessive absences and tardies at any point during the school year in order to make parents and students aware of the possible consequences of not attending school on a consistent basis.

Truancy

Truancy is defined as a student absenting him/herself from school without parent/legal guardian permission, or leaving school grounds without permission during the school day. Truancy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Early Departure/Late Arrivals

The school discourages early departures and requests that families arrange medical and dental appointments, etc. after school hours, on early dismissal days, or during vacation periods. Check the calendar for days when school is not in session.

Any student arriving after the first bell (times listed below) is considered late and must report to the office for a late slip. Tardiness is entered on a student's permanent record. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the homeroom teacher to receive the necessary communication or work that may have been missed due to lateness.

On a regular school day, a student should be counted present for the full day if in attendance for 4 or more hours. A student is counted present for a half day if in attendance for at least 2 hours but less than 4 hours. Children leaving after 1:00pm will be marked as leaving early.

SCHOOL HOURS

| GRADES | NORMAL DAY | EARLY DISMISSAL | 2 HOURS LATE |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 6-8 | 7:40am - 2:30 pm | 7:40am - 11:45pm | 9:40am - 2:30 pm |
| 1-5 | 8:05am -2:55 pm | 8:05am - 12:05pm | 10:05am - 2:55 pm |
| Kindergarten | 8:05am- 2:45pm | 8:05am-12:00pm | 10:05am-2:45pm |
| PreK3 | 8:20am - 11:20am | 8:20am - 11:20am | 10:20am - 11:45am |
| PreK4 (½ day) | 8:15am -11:20am | 8:15 -11:20am | 10:15am -11:45am |
| PreK 4 (Full day) | 8:15am - 2:20 pm | 8:15am - 11:20am | 10:15am -2:20 pm |

Early Dismissal Days for 2023-2024 and policy for late pick up

August 28, 2023
September 21, 2023
October 24, 2023
October 31, 2023
December 20, 2023
February 2, 2024
March 28, 2024
April 22, 2024

May 10, 2024
May 24, 2024
June 5, 2024
June 6, 2024

Families will be charged for students that are picked up after 15 minutes of the posted early dismissal time for that student. Students will remain with their homeroom teacher for the initial 15 minutes. Afterwards, students will be monitored in the main office on each campus by administration. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations.

Before and After School Care

EDC (Extended Day Care) is offered by the school for the benefit of working parents. Day Care is from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM for children enrolled in grades preschool-gr. 5. Middle School Day Care is available from school dismissal until 6 PM. The rules and regulations stated in the handbook also apply during Extended Day Care time since this program is an extension of the school day.

Re-registration of current families using extended care takes place in early April. Open registration occurs at the end of April. Applications are available in the main office on each campus or call 410-879-1113 (ES) and 410-877-9660 (MS). There is a \$25 non-refundable application fee. Parents are urged to register early as there are limited openings. For fees and availability, please contact the Director of Extended Day Care, Mrs. Schrader at tschrader@smsch.org.

Emergency & Weather Related Closings/Delayed Openings

St. Margaret School follows the Harford County School System decision on closings, late openings, and early closings. All school information is announced on radio and TV stations WBAL. On a scheduled early dismissal day, if Public Schools open 2 hours late, SMS will be closed. On days when Public Schools are closed and SMS is open, listen to radio and TV stations WBAL for our school announcement. School alert messages will be sent to families for any weather related delay or closure.

Inclement Weather Closings

The Archdiocese of Baltimore incorporates 3 inclement weather days in which the school is closed in the school calendar. Any additional inclement weather days will be virtual at home learning days. Virtual at home learning schedules, policies, and procedures will be sent to families via email and/or through Google Classroom.

FOOD RELATED POLICIES

Birthday Celebrations/Treats/Snacks

All food items sent into school must be store bought. Homemade items will not be distributed. Prepackaged items are easier to distribute for teachers. Teachers will determine the time of day the food items will be shared that is convenient to their schedule. Food treats are to remain small in nature such as ice cream, snack packs, cookies, cupcakes. Full lunches are not to be purchased for the class. Please reach out to the classroom teacher for any questions or concerns.

ES Lunch/ES Cafe

Grades 3-5 will use the gym during designated lunch periods. New round tables with benches were purchased to accommodate all students in one grade level at a time. Students in grades PreK-2 will remain in their classrooms for lunch with their aides. A positive behavior incentive will be implemented in the cafe. Parents in all grades are welcome to sign up to assist during lunch duty.

DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM POLICY

Students will adhere to the typical school year uniform policies for this school year. We reserve the right to modify the uniform policy should mandates from the Archdiocese of Baltimore and/or the State of Maryland change during the school year.

The official uniform company for St. Margaret School is Flynn & O'Hara. They are located at North Plaza Shopping Center, 88687 Waltham Woods Road, Parkville, MD 21234. They can be reached at 410-828-4709 and <https://www.flynnohara.com/>

School uniforms are worn by students in kindergarten through grade eight beginning with the first day of school. Pupils are expected to be in complete uniform throughout the school day from the moment they arrive at school until they leave school grounds. Exceptions for extraordinary circumstances will be determined by the staff. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if clarification of any element of the dress code is necessary. The acceptable uniform is as follows:

PRE-K and KINDERGARTEN

Both boys and girls wear the school gym uniform to school every day. From Nov. 1-Mar. 31, students wear the school sweatpants and sweatshirts over their gym uniform. A long sleeved shirt option has been added for students in grades PreK and K as another option to the sweatshirt.

GRADES 1-5

Options: Fall/Spring (Warm Weather): Aug.-Oct. 31st; April 1st- June
Winter (Cold Weather): Nov. 1st-March 31st

BOYS

- Navy blue dress pants with a hem that touches the shoe top. Levis, corduroys, and denims are not acceptable. A solid navy, brown, or black belt must be worn with pants.
- White polo shirts with the SMS logo, long or short sleeves
- SMS navy sweatshirt or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Solid navy uniform pullover sweater or vest (no white trim)
- Plain white or navy blue socks, without logos that are visible at the top of the shoe.
- Warm weather option: Navy blue uniform walking shorts. Solid navy, brown or black belt must be worn.
- Shorts and pants **MUST** have belt loops. Belts are to be worn in grades 1-8.

GIRLS

- Plaid uniform jumper that is no more than 1 inch above the knee
- White uniform oxford blouse with a Peter Pan collar, long or short straight, tailored, sleeve as featured at Flynn and O'Hara
- SMS navy sweatshirt or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Solid navy uniform cardigan or long sleeved sweater
- Plain white or navy blue socks without logos that are visible at the top of the shoe

- Cold weather option: Uniform turtleneck with logo or blouse may be worn with the jumper. The turtleneck or polo shirt with logo may be worn with the uniform slacks. Uniform navy slack with a solid navy, black, or brown belt may replace the jumper. Plain navy opaque or heavy cable stitched tights may be worn with or without the white crew socks. Navy blue knee highs may also be worn.
- Warm weather option: Navy blue uniform walking shorts or navy skort may be worn with the white uniform blouse or the white polo shirt with SMS logo. A solid navy, brown or black belt must be worn with walking shorts.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Options: Fall/Spring (Warm Weather): Aug.-Oct. 31st; April 1st- June

Winter (Cold Weather): Nov. 1st- March 31st

Only Middle School students are permitted to wear spirit wear sweatshirts to school.

BOYS

- Navy blue dress pants with a hem that touches the shoe top. Levis or denims are not acceptable. A solid navy, brown or black belt must be worn with pants.
- White uniform oxford shirt with SMS logo on the pocket, long or short sleeves
- School tie
- Solid navy uniform pullover sweater, school sweatshirt, or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Plain white or navy blue crew socks without logos that are visible at the top of the shoe.
- Warm weather option: White polo shirt with SMS logo may be worn with dress pants
- Shorts and pants **MUST** have belt loops. Belts are to be worn in grades 1-8.

GIRLS

- Plaid uniform skirt that is no more than 1 inch above the knee
- White uniform oxford blouse with SMS logo on the collar, long or short sleeves
- School sweatshirt or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Plain white crew socks without logos that are visible at the top of the shoe.
- Cold weather option: Navy uniform sweater, ¼ SMS Zip pullover, or official school sweatshirt may be worn. Plain navy opaque tights or heavy cable stitched tights may be worn.
- Warm weather option: White golf shirt with SMS logo may be worn with the plaid uniform skirt.

GRADES 1-8

SHOES (All shoes must be worn correctly. Backs of shoes may not be flattened. The back of the shoe must cover the heel of your foot.)

- Grades 1-8 Classic dirty buck with the red sole Examples: BASS DIRTY BUC or ACADEMY GEAR/WILLITS DIRTY BUC (Flynn & O'Hara)
- Grades 1-5 Girls - black or navy Mary Jane shoe
- Grades 1-5 Boys - Merrell Jungle Nubuck Moc
- Grades 6-8 Tan Sperry boat shoe

GYM UNIFORM

- SMS logo gym shorts and T-shirt.
- Athletic tennis shoes (tie or velcro) that support your child's foot and ankle during physical activity must be worn on Gym days.
- Plain white or navy blue socks without logos that are visible at the top of the shoe.
- SMS navy sweatshirts and sweatpants. Gym shirt must be worn under the sweatshirt. No defacing of the gym uniform is permissible.
- All students grades 1-8 wear gym uniforms to school on gym days. They must wear regulation sweatshirts and sweatpants over their uniforms from November 1st to April 1st. Students can wear sweats before November 1st and after April 1st if the weather warrants it. Students will also be permitted to wear them during the school day on the scheduled P.E. day.
- Middle School students should wear their regular uniforms when visiting the Elementary School campus for school day activities unless directed otherwise by administration.
- All students wear their regular uniform on gym days when school wide liturgies or prayer services are scheduled and whenever the administration deems appropriate.

THE ONLY LOGO THAT IS TO BE WORN ON ANY UNIFORM CLOTHING or SWEATSHIRT IS THE ST. MARGARET SCHOOL LOGO.

SPIRIT WEAR IS NOT CONSIDERED PART OF THE OFFICIAL SCHOOL UNIFORM. Students in grades 6-8 may wear SMS spirit wear sweatshirts in place of the blue uniform sweatshirt.

Hair

St. Margaret School recognizes that particular hairstyles are often part of racial, ethnic, spiritual, and cultural identity and practice. Accordingly, it is the policy of the School to permit individual families to decide the appropriate cared-for hairstyle for their children. The following styles are examples of prohibited hairstyles: head shaving, lines and designs, faux-hawks, mohawks, mullets, spikes, coloring of any kind, or any style that interferes with a student's vision. If parents have a question about a hairstyle, they should contact the administration for guidance.

Jewelry and Accessories

Students are not permitted to wear nail polish, fake nails, make-up, or tanning products. Girls in grades 6-8 may wear only clear nail polish. Girls only, may wear one pair of earrings in their earlobes. Posts and small hoops are acceptable. Dangling earrings are unacceptable. A watch, religious necklace, and medical alert bracelet/necklace are the only other acceptable items of jewelry that may be worn. SMART watches or any watches connecting to the internet are not permitted. On gym day, necklaces should not be worn. Tattoos of any kind or any other body art/writings are not acceptable.

Cell Phones

Phones are permitted for grades 6-8 but **MUST** remain off during the school day and stored in their classroom.

Attire

Student dress should be neat and well-groomed at all times. Shirts and blouses must be buttoned and tucked in. No colored shirts or similar apparel may be worn under the blouses or shirts. Defacement of uniforms is not allowed. The school urges parents to instruct their child(ren) in good habits for personal hygiene at appropriate stages in their development. Uniform slips will be issued to students that are not adhering to the correct dress code policy.

On Out of Uniform Days, students must wear appropriate clothes. Clothing may not contain terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, slogans, writing, or images that are offensive, political, harassing, or discriminating in nature. Halter or crop tops, flip-flops, spaghetti straps, backless shoes, sandals, shirts with inappropriate language and innuendoes, studs, chains, gloves, and skorts are not to be worn. Modesty and safety are of utmost importance. Only the official SMS gym shorts, appropriate in length, may be worn during the warm weather uniform months (August - October 31st); however, shorts are not permitted on out of uniform days during the cold weather uniform dates (November 1st-March 31st). Leggings may be worn with shirts that provide full coverage of the lower body. Students not meeting these guidelines will be provided with gym uniforms from the nurse's office or will be asked to call parents to provide a change of clothes.

On Uniform Add-on Days, students may add additional items to their standard uniform such as hats, headbands, bows, socks, necklaces. T-shirts and sweatshirts (cold weather) that are related to the add-on theme day are permitted instead of the normal uniform.

Out of Uniform and Uniform Add-on Days 2023-2024

September 25th- Out of Uniform: Sweats and School colors

October 31st- PreK-Grade 2: Costumes Grade 3-8: Orange/Black Halloween add on

November 10th- Red, White, Blue USA Uniform add on

December 1st- Out of Uniform: PJ Day (St. Nicholas Celebration)

December 19th- Green/Red Uniform add on

December 20th- Christmas Sweater Uniform add on

February 14th- Pink/Red Valentine's Day add on

March 15th- Green St. Patrick's Day add on

April 22nd- Out of Uniform: Earth Day

May 24th- Red, White, Blue Uniform add on

June 5th- Aloha Uniform add on

The administration will be the judge of the appropriateness and conservativeness of hairdo and jewelry in our school setting. Students who violate the out of uniform rules or uniform add on day rules may receive a demerit or not be allowed to participate in the next out of uniform day.

Used Uniforms

Used uniforms can be dropped off at the main office of each campus 2 weeks prior to a used uniform sale. General used uniform sales will be held in July, during meet the teacher day, before cold weather and warm weather uniform changes. The dates will be announced when finalized through the HSA.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items can be located on each campus. Items with name tags will be returned to individual students. Students are encouraged to check the lost and found regularly if missing belongings.

ACADEMICS AND ACADEMIC POLICIES

Instruction/Curriculum

The Archdiocese of Baltimore Curriculum is designed to prepare students to be Catholic, College and Career Ready. Each course of study fosters students' Catholic identity, shaping them to be models of Christian living for others. We provide students with a curriculum that is rigorous and rich in various disciplines. By continuing to implement new standards that are challenging, we work to fulfill the promise of quality Catholic education that educates the whole child: mind, body and soul.

Operating under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Baltimore Department of Catholic Schools, St. Margaret School follows the Archdiocese of Baltimore's curricula. This curricula meets and exceeds the curriculum requirements for the Maryland State Department of Education. The Archdiocese of Baltimore periodically reviews and updates curriculum.

Textbooks

Sadlier Math Series
Sadlier Vocabulary Series
Sadlier Grammar Series
Sadlier Phonics to Reading Grades K-2
Literacy Footprints
Loyola Press Growing With God (includes Family Life)
Language of Literature
Follett D'Nealian Handwriting
Spanish Workbook Grades 1-3
EnVivo Spanish Grades 4-5
Perfection Learning Spanish Grades 6-8

Standardized Testing

All Archdiocesan schools administer the achievement test designated by the Department of Catholic Schools in prescribed grades. Elementary school students in grades 2-8 are administered the MAP Assessment three times a year to measure growth. Grades 3, 5, and 7 also take the Science Assessment each Spring. Pre K and Kindergarten students are administered the BRIGANCE developmental screenings. Parents are given feedback as to how their child is scoring at the end of the year.

All students in grades 5, 8, 9 and 12 are given the ACRE (Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education) the spring of each school year. This assessment gives information for growth to each school as it assesses how well the religious education program is forming Christian disciples. This is a school assessment and no individual student scores are given.

GRADING POLICY

The grading system set forth by the Archdiocesan Division of Schools is as follows:

| GRADES PreK-2 | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Progress Codes | Effort/Conduct |
| I – Independent | O - Outstanding |
| P – Progressing | G - Good |
| E – Emerging | S - Satisfactory |
| NA – Not Assessed at this time | N - Needs Improvement U - Unsatisfactory |

| GRADES 3-8 | | |
|----------------------|----------------|---|
| Subject Marking Code | | Effort/Conduct |
| A+ 97-100 | C+ 80-84 | O - Outstanding |
| A 93-96 | C 75-79 | G - Good |
| B+ 89-92 | D 70-74 | S - Satisfactory |
| B 85-88 | E 69 and below | N - Needs Improvement U – Unsatisfactory |

| GRADES 3-8: Achievement Comments | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| I | Independent |
| V | Very Good Progress |
| P | Progressing |
| S | Satisfactory |
| N | Needs Improvement |

Extracurricular Activity Participation

Students participating in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student council, creative arts, etc.) must maintain academic and behavioral requirements as outlined by the club monitor and administration.

Graduation Requirements

Students in 8th grade who successfully complete the course of study as outlined by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, will be awarded a diploma at the end of the school year. An 8th grade student must be in good academic, financial and behavior standing in order to participate in the end of the year graduation activities. Graduation from St. Margaret School is a privilege. Proper behavior at all 8th grade events including the Graduation ceremony is expected by all students, parents and guests. All obligations must be in order, i.e. tuition paid, EDC payments, school

books/materials returned. If financial obligations are not paid in full and/or academic requirements are not met, Graduation Certificates and Progress Reports will not be issued.

Honor Roll

Honor Roll for students in Grades 6-8 – Students in grades 6-8 who demonstrate high academic achievement and who positively impact the learning environment are placed on Honor Roll based on the following criteria:

Principal’s Honor Roll – All A’s and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time.

Second Honors – all A’s and B’s (more A’s than B’s) and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time

Students in grade 5 will be recognized for outstanding academic performance once during the year. Fifth graders will be awarded Honor Roll status at the end of the third trimester.

Three special awards are presented each trimester to recognize outstanding achievement in an academic area. These awards are: the Jackie Kinzler Science Award, the Mary Strong Language Arts Award, and the Kim Trio Math Award. Students may only receive each award once in grades 6, 7 or 8. Teachers nominate students who have excelled in the academic subject area through class participation, completion of homework and projects, and assessment scores. In addition, the student supports the efforts of their classmates and exhibits an enthusiasm for the content of the subject area. Awardees are selected by the Principal each trimester. Students receive a certificate and a small monetary award.

Progress Reports and Interims

The schools of the Archdiocese use a student information system known as PowerSchool. This is a data-driven system that assists parents, teachers, and administrators in maintaining school records and academic progress. This system is designed to provide a very informative tool for reporting to parents. Communication is the key to any successful school career. Parents of students in grades 3-8 are required to access their child’s grades through PowerSchool on an ongoing basis. Using PARENT ACCESS a parent can check on a student’s progress at any time during the school year. Parent Access requires that parents complete the online training session, receive the access codes for each child, and have Internet capabilities. Parents are encouraged to review their child’s records frequently and contact the teacher with questions or concerns as they arise.

Progress Reports (Report Card)

Reports of a child’s progress are issued on a trimester basis. Progress Reports are distributed three times per year to grades PreK through 8. Trimester progress report envelopes should be signed and returned to the homeroom teacher within the week. Trimester 3 progress reports are distributed on the last day of school.

Interim Reports

Interim reports for students in grades 3–8 are issued halfway through the trimester and can be accessed through PowerSchool.

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

Conferences will be held on October 25, 2023. Parents will be informed as to when to register online for one teacher conference. Parent teacher conferences are to be held in person.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the concern should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Therefore, the parents should first contact the teacher involved and then, if necessary, the teacher and parents should go to the principal. Parents are not permitted to interrupt teachers before or during school hours. Teachers should be seen by appointment only. If a conference with the principal and/or teacher is needed, please call the office, email or write a note at least a day or two in advance of the conference date. In the best interest of students, the school welcomes and encourages verbal and written communication between parents and teachers. Please allow teachers 24 hours to respond to emails as they are not checking emails during the day while teaching. Emergencies and time sensitive needs require parents to contact the main office (ES: 410-879-1113 MS: 410-877-9660).

Promotion Policy

Students who successfully complete requirements for all subjects in a given school year are promoted to the next grade. Students in the 8th grade who successfully complete the requirements for all 8th grade subjects are candidates for graduation.

Retention Policy:

Students who do not successfully complete the required educational program may be retained at the current grade level. This decision is made by the principal in consultation with the parents after following the timeline described below.

Teachers should communicate with parents on a regular basis regarding the child's progress. By mid- February, the teacher, principal, parents, (and student) review the student's work performance to date and discuss his/her educational needs for the remainder of the year and the possibility of failure and/or retention. This meeting is followed by a written communication to the parents reviewing the content of the meeting, including the educational plan.

High School Admissions and Visitation Policy

Eighth grade students are allowed three excused absences for high school visitations. They will not be considered absent if appropriate documentation of the visitation is provided.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Statement on Philosophy of Discipline

St. Margaret School strives to develop responsible, courteous, self-disciplined boys and girls whose pride in themselves, their parents, their school, and their community is reflected in their behavior. The development of such young people requires a consistent practice of thoughtful, responsible behavior during these formative years. Students are made aware that they are an integral part of the faith community and that their actions affect themselves as well as the entire community. The ultimate purpose is to develop true Christian character and a sense of responsibility: to establish an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence; and to protect the welfare of the individual, as well as the school community. Students may be disciplined for conduct that occurs on school premises or at school-sponsored events, or for other conduct that adversely affects the interests or reputation of the school regardless of where the conduct occurs.

Preschool Discipline Policy

Our Code of Conduct is based upon the Christian values of love, respect, and forgiveness. The well-being and safety of each child guides our discipline procedures. When a child's actions interfere with the learning environment or may result in injury to self or others, the teacher intervenes. Strategies, such as distraction, redirection, or time-out are used by the teacher or aide to improve the situation. By giving choices and offering experiences in problem solving our preschool program provides a learning environment that encourages self-discipline.

Elementary and Middle School Discipline Policy

Our Code of Conduct is based upon the Christian values of respect, love, and forgiveness. Our school community believes every child has the right to learn and every teacher has the right to teach. Therefore, actions that interfere with the learning environment result in a consequence.

Conflicts are a normal and healthy part of living and growing. We encourage students to handle conflicts and not to avoid them. The goal is reconciliation. The Counselors and/or the Administration will implement acceptable conflict resolution techniques to work towards a solution.

Discipline is a process, not a single action or statement. The ultimate goal is to have students become self-disciplined individuals who know and accept personal boundaries, standards, and expectations. Self-disciplined persons are motivated to do the right thing whether observed or not. Our goal is to have students accept responsibility for their actions and mature into self-disciplined Christians.

Behavior

To maintain a positive learning environment and standards that are consistent with our Christian philosophy, it is essential that students exhibit a sense of responsibility and respect for

themselves as well as others. Listed below are some behaviors that are unacceptable and may warrant disciplinary action.

- Rudeness
- Vulgarity
- Disrespect in manner and/or language
- Rowdiness
- Using the property of others without permission
- Dishonesty
- Failure to have necessary supplies for class
- Disruptive Behavior
- Dangerous Play
- Dress Code violations
- Gum chewing
- Harassment of any kind by word or manner
- Smoking/using matches/vaping/gummies
- Willful destruction of school property
- Leaving school property without permission
- Fighting or threats of violence
- Theft or extortion
- Possession or consumption of any drug or look-alike drug while at school or while attending a school function
- Possession or consumption of alcohol while at school or while attending a school function
- Possession of knives/weapons or look-alike knives/weapons
- Possession of pornographic material(s)

After school activities, while riding the bus to field trips or other such activities are included in the definition of on-campus conduct.

When it comes to social media, whether posted during school hours, and on school property, or while occurring outside of the school property, if the behavior creates a substantial disruption, the school can take action relative to in-school discipline.

Parents and students will receive oral or written charges against [them].

Generally, the teacher will deal with infractions. Should circumstances warrant, the parent and/or the Administration involved will be consulted. In cases of serious or repeated violations, students may be subject to disciplinary suspension or expulsion. The school's fair procedure to be used in cases of possible suspension or expulsion is as follows: (review AOB policy 2.1 and 3.0)

Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act's Applicability to Cannabis Use in Schools

There have been significant legislative changes at the state level around the use of cannabis in recent years. This year, the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation that will allow individuals 21 and older to purchase cannabis products legally from a licensed dispensary, beginning on July 1, 2023. However, it is important to keep in mind that, despite these changes,

cannabis continues to be classified as a Schedule 1 controlled substance under federal law, and its use remains illegal under federal law.

The policies and regulations set forth by the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act apply directly to the use of cannabis in schools, including childcare facilities located in schools, even if such use might be permitted under State law. All employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors are required to comply with this law and may not distribute, possess, use, or be under the influence of cannabis while in schools or during working hours, including but not limited to while transporting students or attending school-sponsored activities.

Demerits

A demerit is a disciplinary form that allows teachers to document behavior infractions. It also serves as a form of communication with parents about their child's behavior. When students receive a demerit, the teacher will notify the parent via email or telephone. The demerit form will be sent home and the parent should sign and return the form the next school day. Parents are requested to discuss with their child the reason for school rules and policies and the expectations that he/she can follow them. In grades 3-8, students that receive three demerits will serve an after school detention.

Office Referral

An office referral is a disciplinary form completed by the teacher and sent to administration to address and document behavior infractions. Administrators will notify the parents via telephone to discuss the behavior and a plan of action for the student.

Detentions

Inappropriate behaviors that are more serious in nature may result in detention. During detention, students complete a written assignment/reflection about their behavior and/or a school service project. If students are absent on their assigned detention day, they will need to report on the next scheduled day. Detentions are cumulative for the year.

Suspension

Repeated violations of the code of conduct or an action of a serious nature may result in a student suspension. After careful consideration of all factors, the principal will determine if a suspension is merited and for how many days. Any student on suspension may not attend school functions during that time period. While on suspension, the student is still responsible for missed work. After the specified amount of time for suspension, which shall not exceed three consecutive school days, the student and the parent(s) guardian(s) will meet the Administration for reinstatement. The administration reserves the right to determine the conditions for reinstatement.

Expulsion

The principal shall determine if any infraction of this section exists. The decision of the principal shall be based upon reasonable cause. St. Margaret School reserves the right to search school property (e.g., lockers, desks), a student's belongings, and areas under the student's control in order to enforce school policies, rules and regulations or otherwise to preserve a safe and orderly learning environment.

An expelled student forfeits all privileges of the St. Margaret School student. The Administrator reserves the right not to re-admit an expelled student at a later date. If a student is to be expelled, the student is entitled to a prompt review procedure established by the Department of Catholic Schools. A written request for review must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools within 10 working days of the notice of intent to expel. Parents are given the option to withdraw the student in lieu of expulsion.

The school reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body.

Search and Seizure

St. Margaret School reserves the right to search school property (e.g. lockers, desks), a student's belongings, and areas under the student's control in order to enforce school policies, rules and regulations or otherwise preserve a safe and orderly learning environment.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the act of copying words, ideas, or images from a source without giving credit to that source. When a student presents someone else's work as their own, it is an act of plagiarism. Examples of plagiarism may include, but are not limited to: copying word-for-word without giving proper acknowledgement of the source, submitting work written by another student, copying images without properly citing their source.

Students of St. Margaret School are taught a progression of age-appropriate skills which enable them to understand the concept of plagiarism and avoid engaging in acts of plagiarism. These skills also serve to enhance our students' abilities as writers, thinkers, and individuals of strong moral character.

Because plagiarism is a serious academic and honor offense, it falls under the School's Code of Conduct regarding dishonesty. Consequences for a student who has plagiarized are as follows.

Generally, the teacher will deal with infractions. Should circumstances warrant, the parent and/or the Administration involved will be consulted. In cases of serious or repeated violations, students may be subject to disciplinary suspension or expulsion.

The Plagiarism Policy also includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (Ex: ChatGPT).

HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment or abuse of any kind is not acceptable behavior in St. Margaret School and will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion.

Policy

It is the policy of the Archdiocese to prohibit discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic school shall adhere to this policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.) A school is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings.

Scope

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, at school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this Policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual's disciplinary record.

Prohibited Conduct

- A. For purposes of this Policy, "harassment" means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, or protected activity, that:
 - (i) Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
 - (ii) Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
 - (iii) Otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.

- B. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, handicap or disability, gender identity or expression. “Sexual” harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Procedure

- C. Any person who believes that a student is being subjected to harassment should immediately report the harassment to any one or more of the following individuals: the student’s teacher, the principal of the school, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
- D. Individuals are encouraged to report harassment early, before it becomes severe or pervasive, so that preventive action can be taken. All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.
- E. Any retaliation, reprisals, or intimidation, whether by the alleged harasser or from another source, directed toward the complaining party or anyone else as a result of the filing or investigation of a harassment complaint is considered a serious violation of this Policy and should be reported immediately.
- F. Once the investigation is complete, the school will take immediate and appropriate corrective action when it determines that this Policy has been violated. The complaining party and the complained-of party will be advised of the investigation’s findings and conclusions. A report of the findings will be forwarded to the Department of Catholic Schools.

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (as defined below) of any student is prohibited in all Archdiocese of Baltimore Schools. Retaliation or reprisal against anyone who reports such behaviors or participates in an investigation of a report is also prohibited. Such behaviors are contrary to school life in a Christ-centered community, which respects the dignity and uniqueness of all of God's children. To foster a school environment where all students are educated in a safe and caring atmosphere, all Archdiocesan schools will follow established procedures for prevention and intervention, and response.

Harassment of students on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, and sexual orientation are also addressed under the Archdiocesan Student Harassment Policy in the Code of Conduct. Suspected abuse or neglect of students is addressed under the Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth.

“Bullying, harassment, or intimidation” means intentional conduct, including written, verbal, or physical conduct or an intentional electronic communication that:

- a. Creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance or with a student’s physical or psychological well-being and:
 - i. Is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or
 - ii. Is sexual in nature; or
 - iii. Is threatening or seriously intimidating; and
- b. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Electronic technology means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, etc.

Retaliation means an act of reprisal or revenge, i.e., getting back at a person for an act he/she committed (such as reporting misconduct).

Reporting forms are located in the main office and on the school’s website. [REPORTING FORM](#)

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR THE INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Technology skills are necessary to ready our students for their future. Access to the Internet and technology tools (including software tools, web-based applications and services, computer equipment, iPads, and other personal electronic devices) allow students to conduct research, produce digital content, and communicate with classmates and teachers. The Internet and technology tools put enormous power at the fingertips of users. As such, they also place a great deal of responsibility on users.

It is imperative that technology resources be used to build community, encourage critical reflection, and foster readiness for future learning. Developments in technology at the School are to be used ethically, legally, and responsibly. As in other areas, our students are expected to make good choices with regard to their behavior.

Individual users are responsible for their activity on the Internet and technology tools, including the material stored and information shared. In order to protect private and personal information, unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information is prohibited. The School reserves the right to edit Internet accounts for child-only configurations, and to run filtering software for students' protection.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student users (and their parents) recognize the limitations the School imposes on the use of the Internet and technology tools and that they understand the standards of behavior the School expects of users.

All users of the School network and technology tools, whether on a school-owned or personal device, are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines for acceptable use.

Acceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools are for authorized academic and school-related activities that support learning and teaching and:

- Respect the privacy and property rights of others and the well-being of the School
- Are consistent with Roman Catholic values and morals
- Treat technology tools and computer equipment with respect.

Unacceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools include but are not limited to:

- Violating the rights or privacy of others, including by photographing or filming an individual without consent
- Posting or distributing videos or photographs without consent of the persons depicted and the School
- Using technology to send profanity, obscenity, or other offensive or harmful language and/or images
- Unauthorized copying, downloading, or installation of content, software or applications (including plagiarism or "pirating" music)

- Sending false information or sending messages to the School community that fail to identify the sender (including anonymous messages or messages using a pseudonym)
- Using any program designed to disrupt network performance or breach network security, such as software designed to capture passwords or break encryption protocols
- Revealing personal information beyond what is required for login while using Internet or web-based resources
- Responding to inappropriate messages from others (which should be reported to the School)
- Downloading or copying information onto disks or hard drives without prior teacher approval
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are inappropriate or may be offensive to others (including pornography and other inappropriate images)
- Sharing of passwords or attempting to discover another's password (passwords should be changed frequently)
- Using or accessing another's account (network accounts are to be used only by those for whom the account has been established)
- Intentionally writing, producing, generating, copying or introducing dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to viruses, bugs, 'worms', etc.
- Intentionally damaging, altering, or tampering with any hardware, software, printers, keyboards, speakers, etc.
- Accessing or searching files, directories, or folders for which the user does not have authorization
- Intentionally erasing, renaming, or disabling of anyone else's files or programs
- Accessing social media, email, or other off-task websites or apps during School without explicit permission of a teacher or adult supervisor
- Violating School conduct rules or the law.

Harassment/cyber-bullying of others online, whether against a student, non-student, or employee, is serious, is prohibited, and is contrary to the School's policy and values. Harassment/cyber-bullying whether it is initiated on campus or off campus, online or in person, should be reported immediately to a faculty member, and may lead to disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution under Maryland's law prohibiting the Misuse of Interactive Computer Service ("Grace's Law").

Parents are responsible for:

- Reviewing and discussing this policy with their child as well as supporting the School in its enforcement
- Partnering with the School in monitoring their child's technology use
- Modeling appropriate Internet behaviors for their child
- Reporting any concerns regarding this policy or their child's use of the Internet or technology tools to School personnel.

Failure to adhere to the policy guidelines may result in a revocation of a student's Internet access and other technology privileges and disciplinary action up to and including suspension or

expulsion.

Web-based Services

The School uses Google Apps for Education as well as other web-based education tools, sites, and services (“web-based services”) to provide students with important web-based educational experiences and enhanced opportunities to communicate and share collaboratively with one another. As part of students’ use of web-based services, certain educational records may be created, collected, or stored. Directory information, such as a child’s name, email address, grade/age, and enrollment status, may also be shared with web-based services. The School may access, monitor, and review children’s use of web-based services and Internet use and children shall not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any communications or activities through such services. Use of web-based services is for educational purposes only and subject to the conduct and acceptable use guidelines set forth in this Handbook. A list of the School’s web-based services and corresponding privacy policies are available upon request. By enrolling a child in the School, the parent consents to the child’s participation in the School’s academic activities and programs, including the child’s use of and access to web-based services as described in this paragraph. In order to withhold or withdraw consent for the use of web-based services, parents must contact the School principal in writing.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Clubs, school organizations, and activities will be evaluated based on risk, availability of space, and size of the program. This includes clubs/activities that occur during the school day as well as those after school.

Archdiocesan Spelling Bee

Athletics

Communications Club

Creative Arts Club

Local High School Academic Competitions

Music Ministry

Retreats

Robotics

Rosary Club

Trivia Club

Field Trips

Field trips are considered an integral part of the school's educational program and a valuable learning experience for students. Field trips are scheduled at various times during the school year. In advance of the trip, a permission form, required by the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools, is sent home. A student will be permitted to attend the trip only if the permission form is signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher by the specified date along with any fee.

If, for some extraordinary reason, a student is unable to participate, the student is expected to attend school on that day and fees must still be paid since the rates we are quoted reflect total participation. Work will be supplied by the teacher(s), and the student will be assigned a classroom in which to work under the supervision of a staff member. If a student is unable to attend because of illness, we cannot promise a refund. The teacher must be notified if a child will not participate in the field trip experience. Students who are kept home from the trip will be marked absent. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to participate as chaperones on field trips as the need arises. However, because of safety and liability factors, preschool siblings and other school-age siblings are not allowed. We do not permit parents not selected as chaperones to join the group at the trip destination as this creates confusion.

All chaperones are required to complete VIRTUS training.

SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

PBIS

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has implemented an evidence and research-based Anti-bullying program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). PBIS is a comprehensive framework in which schools focus on our Christ-centered teachings and values to create nurturing, safe, positive, and supportive learning environments. Consistent school-wide expectations are visible throughout the school and students' positive behavior is acknowledged and celebrated. The PBIS framework adopts behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that is designed to enhance academics and behavioral outcomes for every student.

Our Catholic Identity guides our vision and our behavior expectations. Our school wide theme is "St. Margaret's School has GRIT." - G (God), R (Respect and Responsibility), I (Integrity), and T (Teamwork). GRTI Matrices are created to increase positive behavior in various locations throughout the school day for students.

 **GRIT ES Matrix.docx**

 **GRIT MS Matrix.docx**

Special Services

Resource teachers are available for students who are in need of special skill reinforcement. A guidance program has been developed for all classes, kindergarten through eighth grade. A counselor is available on each campus to assist students as needed. (ES: [Mrs. Curran mcurran@smsch.org](mailto:mcurran@smsch.org) MS: pmessararis@smsch.org) The health rooms are staffed by a registered nurse on each campus. (ES: kpieochocki@smsch.org MS: lzankowitz@smsch.org)

IEP Process

If a child is not progressing academically, the school may ask the parent/guardian to initiate or the parent/guardian may initiate on their own the process to request a professional consultation and/or evaluation through the local public school system. The evaluative process is generally called the IEP Process (Individualized Educational Plan) and begins when a parent/guardian calls 'Child Find.' Following the initial phone call to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Child Find, parents/guardians are given an initial meeting date within 30 days. At this initial meeting, parents/guardians and school faculty are invited to share their concerns, present information, and

discuss whether an evaluation will take place. Catholic school staff, in particular the student's teacher, are a vital part of the process.

If an evaluation is deemed warranted and takes place, recommendations and an academic plan are developed and given to the parent/guardian at the summative meeting following the academic evaluation.

If such a plan is developed and the test results determine that there is a need for accommodations and/or modifications within a student's learning environment, the school administrator will consult with the parent/guardian to determine what accommodations, resources, plans, and school placements may be implemented. When appropriate, A Student Accommodation Plan is developed at your child's Catholic School.

HEALTH POLICIES

Parents are required to complete a Health Form listing any allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information.

The school must be notified of any changes that occur during the school year.

Maryland School Immunization Requirements

A child may not enter school, unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day and year of each vaccination and be signed by a physician or health department official. In the case of religious objection or medical contra-indication, form DHMH 89, must be submitted and kept on file and be approved by the school. Exempted students are to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of the disease for which they are not immunized.

Students entering elementary school must submit the following forms:

- Physician Physical Form
- Immunization Records
- Dental Form
- Parent Health Assessment
- Lead Testing (by first grade)

Students entering middle School (6th grade and new students only) must submit the following forms:

- Physician Physical Form
- Updated Immunization Form
- Dental Form
- Parent Health Assessment

All forms are to be sent to the school prior to the first day of school. If you have any questions please contact the school nurse.

Dispensing of Medication

The administration of medication in school is discouraged. However, if a student's physician recommends that the student receive prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, a written order from the student's doctor is required. Medication can only be dispensed with a written order from the student's physician, specifying start and stop date. The original medication container or box for inhalers must be brought to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student's name and grade.

Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own. Under special circumstances, individual students may be authorized by their physician to carry and self-administer emergency medications (e.g. inhalers, epi-pens). In this case, the school nurse must be consulted. All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian.

Communicable Diseases

Parents must call the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify their county Health Department. All reports are confidential. Reportable diseases include the following:

Measles – regular or German (Rubella)

Tuberculosis

Meningitis

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Hepatitis

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

Food Poisoning

Human Immune Deficiency

Mumps

Virus Infection (AIDS and all

Adverse reactions to Pertussis Vaccine

other symptomatic infections)

Lyme disease

Animal bites / Rabies

Chicken Pox (varicella)

Influenza

Covid 19

Any student with drainage from the eyes associated with conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be kept at home until under treatment from a doctor. A doctor's note will be required for readmission to school. Students who have chicken pox are excluded from school until all lesions are scabbed over.

Head Injury

If any injury to the head or any other serious injury occurs to a student, then the nurse will call the parent and send home a report. The report is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. If the parent/guardian or alternative contact person cannot be reached in an emergency, the school will contact police/ambulance for assistance.







Allergies

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies including food allergies. School medication orders must be renewed each year by the physician and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student carries an EPIPEN with them, the physician must state this requirement on the order.

Bloodborne Pathogens

A complete Bloodborne Pathogens Standard Exposure Control Plan has been established by the school and can be found in each Faculty Handbook and on file in the Office.

I need to stay home if...

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I have a fever | I have shortness of breath or a persistent dry cough | I am vomiting | I have diarrhea | I have a rash | I have an eye infection |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Temperature of 100.4 or higher in the last 48 hours | In the past 48 hours | Within the past 24 hours | Within the past 24 hours | Body rash with itching or fever. | Redness, itching, and/or "crusty" drainage from eye. |

I am ready to go back to school when I am...

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Fever free for 48 hours without use of fever reducing medication. i.e. Tylenol, Motrin | My symptoms are improving and I have not developed a fever. | Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals. | Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours. | Free from rash, itching or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed. | Evaluated by my doctor and have a note to return to school. |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|

Vision/Hearing Screening

The school follows the directives of Harford County Health Department and responds to parent's requests for individual testing.

This testing is usually done for:

- All new students who have not provided documentation for screening in the past year
- All students the year they enter the school in Grades PreK, Kindergarten, 1, and 8
- Grade 3 or Grade 4 if funding is available
- Any student with a suspected hearing or vision problem as reported by school staff or parents/guardians.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy Procedures

Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. Our school policy supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, and/or the local police department, as well as to the Principal.

Insurance

The Office of Risk Management, on behalf of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, offers a voluntary student accident plan for school families to purchase. This coverage is an inexpensive way for families to cover co-pays, high deductibles, and may even provide accident coverage in the event that no other health coverage is available. If a family declines this coverage please be aware that any injuries sustained while at school or during school activities may not be covered by any Archdiocesan insurance policy. For more details regarding purchasing student accident insurance please visit www.archbalt.org/risk.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Visitors

In order to ensure a safe environment for your child, all school doors will remain locked during the school day. All visitors must report to the office and receive an identification badge before visiting other parts of the school buildings. **A valid driver's license or state ID must be presented to receive a badge and access to the buildings.**

Volunteers

Parents are the primary educators of their children. St. Margaret School does not assume complete responsibility for this most important task of educating our students. Rather, the school works in partnership with the parents or guardians. For this reason, some form of parental involvement in the school is expected of each family. Volunteers are needed for classrooms, library, outreach activities, and the Hot Lunch Program.

Before reporting for duty, approved volunteers must sign in at the school office and obtain a Visitor's Badge. You will need your driver's license in order to complete the Raptor screening process. Badges are discarded before leaving the building and volunteers should sign out at the main office upon departure. Siblings are not permitted during school hours when parents are volunteering.

Volunteer Compliance (VIRTUS)

In 2003 the Archdiocese of Baltimore implemented a plan for a thorough screening of all persons who have contact with children in a school setting. St. Margaret School adheres to this plan. Therefore, all adults who volunteer in a classroom including, but not limited to, class parties, mystery readers, lunch helpers, and field day must be volunteer compliant. Chaperones for a field trip must also be in compliance with the Archdiocese of Baltimore Child and Youth protection procedures (Virtus Program). Attendance at school wide assemblies, grade level performances, and school Masses or prayer services do not require Virtus certification. Please contact Mrs. Brenda Bell for further information at bbell@smsch.org or access the Archdiocese of Baltimore's website for current information on compliance.

Swift K-12 Communication

St. Margaret School uses Swift K-12 as a tool for communication for the following:

- Emergency related information
- Weather related closings or delays
- Reminders for early dismissal days

Constant Contact Newsletter (Principal's Post)

St. Margaret School uses Constant Contact as a tool for communication for the following:

- Weekly and monthly information
- Important school related information and upcoming events
- Reminders for HSA related events
- Reminders for other school related activities and timelines

Home School Association (HSA)

St. Margaret School is uniquely blessed in the viability of its Home and School Association. The objectives of this organization are:

- To promote the spiritual and educational welfare of children at home, school, church, and community in a program of Catholic Education.
- To encourage between the home and school a greater degree of cooperation in the Catholic education of our children and to promote a clearer understanding of the mutual educational responsibilities of parents and teachers.
- To encourage the continuance of high standards of Catholic family life.
- To function as a non-profit organization and conduct affairs to raise funds, the net proceeds from which will be donated to Saint Margaret School.
- To act as a liaison between parents and the school.

The Home and School Association operates in a manner which supports and respects the school policies and practices as established by the administration. Membership consists of parents or guardians of students in the school, the administration and members of the faculty. Meetings are announced through the school newsletter and calendar.

Mrs. Stacy Ward - HSA President

smshsapresident@gmail.com

Room Parents

Room parent volunteers are utilized in each classroom to provide support to the teachers and assist them with various tasks throughout the year. The room parents communicate important information to families and organize volunteers. All correspondence sent through the class must first be sent to the homeroom teacher for approval. Room parents should support the Mission of St. Margaret School and communicate in a positive manner (including emails, social networking, etc.) All room parents must be VIRTUS compliant.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Crisis Intervention Plan/Crisis Team-

The Archdiocese has issued directives for handling emergency situations. St. Margaret School will abide and implement these directives. All personnel have been versed on these procedures for proper implementation to ensure the safety of the children. Fire and various safety drills are in place as well as security systems. Fire and crisis safety drills are conducted on a regular basis during the school year. Crisis safety drills include evacuation, reverse evacuation, lock-down, shelter-in-place, drop, cover and hold and severe weather drills. Please abide by all policies to help us provide a safe environment for our children.

St. Margaret School Alert System: Swift K12

Swift K12 is the form of communication that will enable the school to text, call or email information to parents. Daily announcements, closings, events and other non-emergency announcements are sent through emails. Emergency notifications will be sent through phone calls, text, and emails.

Parents are responsible for keeping contact information (phone and email accounts) up to date as emergency related information will be sent through Swift K12 which pulls information from Powerschool and School Admin. Inaccurate information in School Admin- Parent Portal and Powerschool will affect communication with parents in a timely manner.

USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

During the course of the school day, the school grounds are limited to the use of the school, its classes and daily operations. Use of the grounds after school hours must be cleared through the St. Margaret Parish.

Before and After The Official School Day

Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:45AM at the Elementary School campus and 7:25AM at the Middle School campus. Staff will not be available to supervise students until those times. Students MUST remain in their vehicles until a staff member permits entrance to the school. Parents MUST remain in their vehicles during drop off.

Parents are required to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. The school is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the times stated above. The school is not liable for any injuries or accidents which may occur before or after the times stated above. If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times. If children are participating in before or after school care, parents must comply with the rules established by the program for drop-off and pick-up.

Playground/School Supervision Provisions

Preschool and Kindergarten students utilize the school playground for recess time. Students in grades K-5 utilize the school parking lot (Peaceful Playground) during recess time. Students should be supervised at all times on the school playground and Peaceful Playground.

Pets

Pets (dogs, cats, etc.) are not permitted on school grounds (on or off leashes) due to health and safety reasons before, during or after school hours.

POLICIES REGARDING LEGAL MATTERS

Student Records

Student records are maintained in the school office or a designated administrative area. Access to records is governed by the Records Policy.

Change of Address

If there is any change in address or contact information, parents are required to notify the office immediately.

Parents whose phone numbers are unlisted **MUST** give the school either the unlisted number or a number where the parent(s) can be reached. It is essential that the school have this information in case of an emergency. It will be kept in the strictest confidence. Any change of phone number or home address is to be given to the school office and the homeroom teacher in writing within a one-week period after the change occurs.

Change of Name or Family Status

If there is a change in the family status/or the change of a child's name, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that describes the custody arrangements must be on file with the school.

Non-Custodial Parent

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Non-custodial parents are welcome to review their child's records unless there is a court order or legal agreement prohibiting such access. The school may notify the custodial parent of a request his/her child during school hours or on school premises unless the custodial parent has consented to review records. St. Margaret School does not allow a non-custodial parent physical access to or the school has a court order permitting access.

Records Policy

St. Margaret School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In general, FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to education records. (The rights granted to parents under FERPA automatically pass to the student when the student turns 18 or enrolls in college.)

These rights and related procedures of St. Margaret School are as follows:

- Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the School. Parents should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- Parents have the right to request that the School correct records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents who wish to request an amendment of the student's records should write to Assistant Principals or Principal and clearly identify the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or misleading and the information they believe should be included in a corrected record. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested, the School will notify the parent of the decision and the parent's right to request a hearing.
- Parents generally have the right to consent in writing to disclosures of information from a student's education record. However, there are certain exceptions to the consent requirement, including disclosures under the following conditions:
 - To School officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is a person employed by the School or the Archdiocese as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff); a person or company with whom the School has contracted to provide a service (e.g., attorney); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities or duties to the School.
 - To other schools to which a student is transferring.
 - In connection with financial aid under certain circumstances.
 - To specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
 - To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
 - To accrediting organizations.
 - In order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
 - To appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.

The School also may disclose appropriately designated directory information without written consent unless a parent objects in writing. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information in certain publications. Examples of such publications include a playbill, showing the student's role in a drama production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets.

The School has designated the following as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Honors and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level

Parents who do not want the School to disclose the above directory information without their prior written consent must notify the Principal in writing within one week upon receipt of the handbook.

- A log must be maintained of each request for access to and each disclosure of educational record information other than disclosure to parents or students 18 or older or school officials. The log should contain the name of the person(s), the date, and the legitimate interests the person had in requesting or obtaining the information.
- Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by St. Margaret School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

Ahera

In October 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and non friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings and implement response actions in a timely manner. Our program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on our inspections, re-inspections, response actions and post- response action activities, including periodic surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress. The plan is kept in the Facilities Office and may be viewed upon request during normal business hours.

Asbestos abatement was done during the summer of 2012 in the boiler room. Floor tiles were removed from the stage area and caulking was removed around the outside of the gym/hall. All work was done in the elementary school building. Inspection completed on November 5, 2012. Report is on file.

July of 2018 abatement was done on our Primary School due to improvement of mechanical systems and windows. Caulking around old windows was abated due to findings of asbestos, piping above ceilings in the building was abated before removal of all old piping. All asbestos has been removed from the building. Inspection completed on July 15, 2018. Report is on file.



**PARENT/GUARDIAN
RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK
2023-2024**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Parent/Student Handbook clearly states the philosophy, objectives, programs, policies and regulations of St. Margaret School. To ensure effective communication between our parents and the school, you and your children are requested to sign the form below indicating that you have received and reviewed this handbook.

Blessings,
Anna C. Shanahan
Principal

We have received and reviewed the policies and guidelines as stated in the St. Margaret School Handbook.

Parent signature and date: _____

Student signature and date: _____